

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 BELFAS 00012 171754Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAJ-01

ACDA-10 MCT-01 COME-00 /081 W

-----171914Z 068615 /65

R 171716Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1540

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDON DERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 12

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UK, EI

SUBJECTC SECSTATE MASON HAS PUBLIC RELATIONS DIFFICULTIES

1. SECRETARY OF STATE ROY MASON IS FIGURING IN THREE CURRENT CONTROVERSIES. EACH PARTIALLY REFLECTS A GROWING ESTRANGEMENT BETWEEN MASON AND NEWS ORGANS.
 2. SUNDAY TIMES FRONT PAGE ARTICLE JANUARY 16 CITING UNNAMED SOURCES IN SECURITY FORCES NORTHERN IRELAND CLAIMED ARMY STRENGTH IN ULSTER WAS TO BE REDUCED BY HALF (TO ABOUT 7000) AND SLACK TO BE TAKEN UP BY ULSTER DEFENSE REGIMENTS UNITS ON FULL-TIME DUTY. NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE AND MR. MASON HAVE ISSUED STRONG DENIALS. MASON STATEMENT INCLUDED REFERENCE TO TIMES ARTICLE AS EXAMPLE OF IRRESPONSIBLE REPORTING.
 3. OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT REPORTEDLY BEING EXTENDED TO NORTHERN IRELAND AND WILL COVER LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNCIL) REPRESENTATIVES AND NOMINATED MEMBERS AREA BOARDS (HEALTH, LIBRARY AND EDUCATION, FOR EXAMPLE) AS WELL AS CIVIL SERVANTS. ACTION FOLLOWS LEAK BY MAYOR OF LARNE, A VANGUARD UNIONIST, OF PORTION UNCLASSIFIED
- UNCLASSIFIED
- PAGE 02 BELFAS 00012 171754Z
- OF CLASSIFIED REPORT ON CONTROVERSIAL SOUTH BELFAST POLEGLASS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT. OLIVER NAPIER, HEAD OF ALLIANCE PARTY HAS SAID ALLIANCE COUNCILLORS WOULD REFUSE TO SIGN AGREEMENT TO OBSERVE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT.
4. SOME TIME AROUND CHRISTMAS MASON DINED WITH BBC CONTROLLERS AND, ACCORDING PRESS SPECULATION ABOUT OFF-RECORD CONVERSATION,

HE SUGGESTED MEDIA INHIBITED TO SOME EXTENT STRUGGLE AGAINST
TERRORISTS. HE ALSO REPORTEDLY SUGGESTED MORATORIUM ON
REPORTING OF TERRORISM. NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS PURSUING
INQUIRY ABOUT DEGREE OF "CENSORSHIP" MR. MASON INTENDED AND
APPEAR UNSATISFIED WITH MASON LETTER LAST WEEK EMPLAINING HE
EMPHASIZING CONTINUING NEED FOR RESPONSIBLE NEWS REPORTING.
SPICER

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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TAGS: PINT, UK, EI, (MASON, ROY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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